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## Replacing the power from San Onofre will be a challenge

Gov. Brown warns the head of the state Energy Commission to 'make sure the lights don't go out' in Southern California.

By Marc Lifsher

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SACRAMENTO — State energy officials are scrambling to fill a large hole in California electricity supplies now that the San Onofre nuclear plant has been permanently closed by Southern California Edison Co.

It's not just an energy problem; it could also become a political hot potato. Power blackouts helped fuel the recall of Gov. Gray Davis a decade ago, and Gov. Jerry Brown may be paying close attention as a result.

California Energy Commission Chairman Robert Weisenmiller recalled that Brown cornered him in August and bluntly warned him to "make sure the lights don't go out down there" in Southern California.

A team of state agencies hopes to come up with a Southern California Reliability Plan by the end of next month.

Its job: Figure out how to replace 2,200 megawatts of output from San Onofre, which served 1.4 million Southern California households. The plant near San Clemente stopped operating in January 2012 after defective steam generators released a small amount of radioactive steam.

And that's not all. Planners also need to find an estimated 400 megawatts a year for increased demand and replace as much as 6,200 megawatts generated by power plants scheduled for retirement.

Energy planners have to be ready for a worst-case scenario. "Part of our concern is the weather," Weisenmiller said, "and the other is things going wrong."